

Equity and Diversity in Recruitment



a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Goals of Recruitment Process

- Find the best person for the position, consistent with UBC's strategy for excellence
- Build a diverse and inclusive university

Anchored in:

Place & Promise: The UBC Plan

Implementing Inclusion

The Aboriginal Strategic Plan

Focus on People

UBC's Equity Statement

UBC's Equity Statement

UBC hires on the basis of merit and is strongly committed to equity and diversity within its community. We especially welcome applications from visible minority group members, women, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities, persons of minority sexual orientations and gender identities, and others with the skills and knowledge to productively engage with diverse communities.

How to achieve recruitment goals

- Conduct a purposeful, thorough, and [equitable recruitment process](#)
- Recognize the value of diversity in achieving excellence, and commit to it – it doesn't just happen
- Everyone's responsibility However, you may consider assigning a committee member to keep the committee accountable

Prior to Recruiting - Forming the Committee

- Establish a diverse selection committee (create diversity on panel where possible)
- Disrupt the natural tendency to hire based on similarities to the committee
- Include representation from different levels, backgrounds, demographic groups, may include members from outside the unit

Activating the Selection Committee

The Selection committee must have a solid understanding of its [roles and responsibilities](#):

- Confidentiality
- [Freedom of Information \(FOI\)](#) - which records are kept, access to email/online comments
- [Conflict of Interest \(COI\)](#) - thorough discussion and identification
- [Selection criteria](#) used in all aspects of the search
- Consider various sources of [Unconscious Bias / Cognitive Error](#)
- Consistency in the interview process: Behavioural based interviewing, [“What May I Ask?”](#)

Complete list of [Selection Committees Resources](#)

Preparing and Placing the Advertisement

- Create/review position description – carefully consider skills/abilities/qualifications
- Identify advertising options + professional networks for outreach (think creatively to reach and attract a diverse applicant pool)
- Identify key features of the position and create ad content
- Include equity and immigration statement
- Use language and advertising venues/networks that will attract a diversity of candidates

Preparing and Placing the Advertisement

- Place the advertisement in accordance with UBC Policy #20: Advertising of Position Vacancies, as well as casting a wide net
- Keep copies of advertisement as shown online or in print
- Consider wording that may provide flexibility (closing dates, level of hire)

Before screening applicants

- In-depth discussion with committee of full range of criteria (see samples) and their relative weights *before* reviewing applications, to avoid “constructed” criteria; note UBC’s diversity priorities are part of the criteria
- Review the diversity of the applicant pool regularly before the closing date. Are your advertising strategies succeeding? Are additional efforts needed? An [employment equity survey for applicants](#) provides a consistent and efficient means to track diversity
- Develop plans for the committee to document its process, to handle COI’s, to check for unconscious biases at each stage, to ensure confidentiality

Screening Applicants

- Review discussion of criteria and weights, noting UBC's diversity priorities are part of the criteria
- Establish short list of candidates based on those who meet qualifications – you must be able to document and justify the way you developed your short list
- Ensure that you do not unreasonably exclude applicants who have qualifications or experience acquired in non-traditional ways; look for diversity in background and experience

Screening Applicants

- Ensure that you don't automatically exclude those with non-traditional career paths, part-time experience, or gaps in experience, given women and visible minority applicants are often represented in these ranks
- If members of employment equity groups do not make it to the short-list, review again to ensure the list does not reflect bias
- Use caution/avoid considering material from social media, second hand reports, etc.

Interviewing Applicants

- Be consistent: same directions if presentation required, same selection committee, interview questions, structure to campus visits, and criteria (further probing questions OK)
- Develop uniform methods (e.g. a form) to collect input from others not on the committee (e.g. other dept. members)
- Develop behavioural interview questions designed to elicit responses that will allow you to measure the candidates ability/experience against the criteria
- Embed equity and diversity in interview questions, e.g. “Vancouver’s diversity is reflected in our staff/students, what challenges might this raise and how have you dealt with this previously?”

Selecting a Candidate

- Assess each candidate as you go through interview/ presentations, but do not rank until the final stage – how well did they meet the criteria the committee established?
- Separate presentation “style” from “content” so that you can evaluate each. Recognize cultural differences in “putting oneself forward” and fairly evaluate the importance of these qualities (firm handshake, eye contact, modesty)
- Conduct reference checks (complementary to reference letters in faculty searches) for top candidates using consistent prepared questions – (include a question about the candidates ability to engage with diverse communities)
- Check references as appropriate to the type of search; in some searches this includes only those provided by candidate

Hiring

- Select the best candidate, again reviewing all criteria and potential unconscious biases
- Offer a salary: within an appropriate salary range; considering the market place; as well as the abilities/skills/experience an individual brings – check for biases **between groups** in this process (would you offer the same salary **to others** who have the same to offer?)
- Selecting a non-Canadian
- Provide appropriate orientation and support to the successful candidate
- Be willing to re-start the search if you do not find an excellent candidate

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

- Lack of planning/timeline
- Not setting criteria early or strategically
- Lack of diversity on committee
- Failure to proactively recruit
- Unconscious bias
- Not addressing conflicts of interest
- Lack of consistency in process
- Ranking candidates too soon
- Lack of clarity on recruitment support: Work-Life Relocation Services, Dual career considerations, child care, housing.

Resource links:

[Faculty Recruitment Guide and](#)

[Selection Committee Resources](#)

Questions for the Committee

- Has the committee discussed all criteria, so that there is a clear understanding of weights of various criteria?
- Have the ads produced a broad and diverse applicant pool? Are additional recruitment efforts needed?
- Is there a plan for documenting the search/selection process, and checking for potential unconscious bias at each stage?
- How will conflicts of interest be handled?
- How will you ensure consistency in interview structure?
- How will input be collected and assessed consistently?
- Have all recruitment materials been reviewed from the Faculty Recruitment Guide and Selection Committee Resources?